

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for immobilizing an injured joint of a body comprising:
 - a first plate adapted for engaging a limb of the body, the first plate having a first end portion;
 - a second plate adapted for engaging a body part to which the limb is connected via the injured joint, the second plate having a second end portion;
 - a hinge for pivotably connecting the first end portion of the first plate and the second end portion of the second plate; and
 - ~~a lockable joint connecting the first end portion of the first plate and the second end portion of the second plate.~~
 - a rod having an adjustable length, a first rod end and an opposite rod end, wherein the first rod end extends from the first plate and the opposite rod end extends from the second plate, and wherein the rod is capable of maintaining the first plate in a fixed position relative to the second plate.
2. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising at least one securing mechanism attached to the first plate.
3. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a second securing mechanism attached to the second plate.
4. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising compressible padding attached to a concave surface of the first plate.
5. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 4, further comprising compressible padding attached to a concave surface of the second plate.
6. (Canceled) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the joint is a pivotable hinge having a locking mechanism for locking the hinge at a desired orientation.

14. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, further comprising a first flexible strap attached to the first plate.
15. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 14, further comprising a second flexible strap attached to the second plate.
16. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 14, further comprising a fastening mechanism engageable with the first strap.
17. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising first and second fastening mechanisms engageable with the first and second flexible straps, respectively.
18. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the fastening mechanism comprises a hook and loop fastener.
19. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the support mechanism comprises a rod having an adjustable length.
20. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein the support mechanism further comprises a lock for maintaining the rod at a desired length.
21. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the support mechanism comprises a rod that is detachable from at least one of the first plate and the second plate.
22. (Withdrawn) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, further comprising an adjustment mechanism on the back surface of the first plate for receiving an end of the rod, wherein the adjustment mechanism facilitates locking the first plate and the second plate at a desired orientation with respect to each other.

7. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the at least one securing mechanism comprises at least one strap.

8. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the at least one securing mechanism comprises a strap and a fastener.

9. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein the fastener comprises a hook and loop fastener.

10. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of the first plate and the second plate is contoured for receiving a body part.

11. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of the first plate and the second plate is capable of flexing into a concave orientation.

12. (Original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first plate is capable of being disassembled from the second plate.

13. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for immobilizing an injured joint of a body, comprising:

a first plate adapted for engaging a limb of the body, the first plate having a first end portion;

a second plate adapted for engaging a body part to which the limb is connected via the injured joint, the second plate having a second end portion pivotably attached to the first end portion of the first plate; and

a support mechanism extending between a back surface of the first plate and a back surface of the second plate, for maintaining the first plate in a fixed position relative to the second plate.

23. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for immobilizing an injured joint of a human body comprising:

- a first plate adapted for engaging a limb of the body, the first plate having a first end portion;

- a second plate adapted for engaging another body part to which the limb is connected via the injured joint, the second plate having a second end portion;

- a hinge pivotably joining the first end portion of the first plate and the second end portion of the second plate;

- means for securing the first plate to the limb of the body;

- means for securing the second plate to the other body part; and

- an adjustable support mechanism having first and second opposite ends, the first end attachable to a back surface of the first plate, and the second end attachable to a back surface of the second plate.